

## Stray by Ellstra

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**Summary:**

Steve almost runs someone over. There shouldn't be anyone this far from Hawkins at this time of the day. Especially not Billy Hargrove. And yet he's there.

# Stray

## Author's Note:

I wrote this fic in two days, this ship owns my ass now. That is all.

The steering wheel was cold under Steve's fingers. He held it lightly, too lightly in Nancy's opinion. Nancy always complained that he was a reckless driver. He would reply that there were greater dangers out there. Unfortunately, it turned out that he was right, yet Nancy criticized another's driving now. Or maybe she didn't. Jonathan seemed like the kind of a guy who fastened his seatbelt before he started the car. Maybe he and Nancy did belong together after all.

Steve's mind wandered off to someone who made his driving habits seem perfectly safe. Billy Hargrove drove like he did everything else - ostentatiously, loudly, aggressively. Steve imagined him speeding at red lights, although that was probably reaching too far, considering Billy was still alive. It didn't matter. In Steve's imagination Hargrove could do whatever the hell Steve wanted him to do. And god, did Steve want him to do things.

In the past few weeks, Steve had developed an alarming fixation on Hargrove. At first it served like a stress relief, as a band aid on the pain left by Nancy's leaving him, but as time went on, it had become a proper obsession. Steve realised it was ugly, wrong, toxic, but it still seemed like a better solution than being sad about Nancy. Jerking off to the image of Hargrove in his mercy was cheaper than alcohol or weed. Steve was beyond the point of giving a fuck.

Steve hit the brakes. The car screeched, his chest hit the steering wheel, but he managed to stop before he could hit the dark figure that must have appeared on the road out of nowhere - he refused to think he allowed his thoughts about Hargrove distract him.

"Shit!" Steve swore and got out of the car. Whoever it was, they stood on the same spot, as if afraid movement might provoke Steve to run them over for good.

“I’m so sorry, are you alright?” Steve asked. He recognized the jacket a split second before he heard the answer.

“You missed me, Harrington,” Billy’s voice was quiet, without his usual venom, “you can’t even run me over properly.”

“I didn’t know it was you,” Steve said. It was the first thing that came to his mind, and of course it was stupid.

“So you didn’t run me over because you didn’t know it was me.” Of course Hargrove picked up on that. He was, despite his looks, unfortunately intelligent.

“Of course I wouldn’t!” Steve protested. Another mistake.

“I always knew you loved me,” Hargrove said and looked straight into Steve’s eyes.

“What happened to your face?” Steve asked. There was a lot of blood, dried and smudged all over Hargrove’s face. One of his eyes was swollen almost shut and Steve could see a bruise blacken around it already.

“Are you jealous because someone else beat me up worse than you?” Hargrove smirked, then hissed in pain.

“You should get that looked at,” Steve couldn’t believe he was giving advice to Billy Hargrove, out of all people.

“Are you a doctor now?” Hargrove spat.

“I don’t need to be to know you should wash the blood off, and put some band-aids on it.”

“Like you care,” Hargrove muttered.

“Believe me, I’m as surprised as you are,” Steve replied. “Come on, I’ll patch you up, I live nearby.”

Steve expected Hargrove to protest, to tell him he didn’t need to be pampered or something equally stupid, but Billy just nodded and made his way to Steve’s car.

The ride was short and tense. Billy clenched his fists so tight his knuckles were white. Steve wondered who could have beat him up so much. The guy was almost pure muscle and he knew how to throw a punch, Steve learned that the hard way. He glanced at Hargrove's hands - there was no torn skin there. He didn't fight back. There was only one kind of fight where you don't fight back.

Hargrove didn't try to hide his curiosity when Steve led him to the house. For some reason, Steve found it refreshing. Everyone always pretended that they didn't find it weird, that they too had a pool at home. Hargrove didn't feel any obligation to filter his reaction like that.

"Won't your parents be pissed that you're taking someone like me into their prissy house?" Hargrove asked when Steve invited him inside.

"They're not home," Steve shrugged.

"You lucky bastard," Hargrove muttered. Steve didn't respond. It seemed like there was more to the statement than met the eye.

"You can put your jacket here," Steve pointed to a coat-stand. Hargrove complied. He was wearing a light green shirt, buttoned up almost to the collar. There was blood on it.

"Do you want a clean shirt?" Steve asked, pointing vaguely to the stains. Hargrove looked at them, as if he had only noticed them now.

"Do you want to watch me take my clothes off?" he asked.

"Damn, you see right through me!" Steve exclaimed. He supposed he didn't manage to make it sound sarcastic enough.

"What wouldn't I do for my knight in shining armor?" Hargrove said and began unbuttoning his shirt. Steve didn't look away. If Hargrove made this a show for him, then who was he not to watch? Billy dropped the shirt onto the ground, somehow making a seductive expression even with his face beaten to a pulp.

"Your turn."

“Let’s get you cleaned up,” Steve said hastily.

“As you wish.”

Steve made him sit down on the edge of the bathtub and he pulled a clean towel out from the cabinet. He poured some warm water on it, wrung it out and went back to Hargrove.

His heart was beating almost painfully in his chest; he really hoped his hands wouldn’t shake, that would be really embarrassing. Hargrove looked up at him, curiosity in one still opened eye. Steve put one hand under Billy’s chin, holding him steady, and used the other to gently wipe away the blood. His skin was hot to the touch.

“You’re really good at this,” Billy said. Steve searched for mockery in his voice but it wasn’t there.

“Thank you.”

“Are you actually blushing, Harrington?” Billy teased. Steve didn’t know if he was blushing before but he definitely was now.

“You should get stitches for this.”

“You’re avoiding the question.”

“Yes, exactly.”

“Aww,” Hargrove cooed, “I like you too, Stevie.”

“Don’t call me that.”

“Or what?”

“Or I’ll kick you. I’m in a very advantageous position for that, as you see.”

“How about now?” Hargrove asked and gripped both of Steve’s legs in the underside of his knees so that Steve had to shuffle closer to him. “Stevie?”

Steve lost his balance. He put his hands on Billy’s shoulders not to

topple them both into the bathtub. Hargrove's hands moved up Steve's thighs.

"I have troubles understanding what you want from me," Steve said, his breath hitching in his throat.

"Do you?"

Billy's hands slid up, cupped Steve's ass. Steve froze, staring at Billy's face as if that alone could make him understand. Billy's fingers slipped under the hem of Steve's pants.

"I want you," Hargrove said. Just like that. Like they didn't hate each other. Or maybe that didn't matter. Steve wasn't sure.

"Not here," Steve shook his head.

"Your bed? Or your parents'?" Hargrove grinned, then hissed in pain as his broken lip started bleeding again when he did that.

"You're not even looking at my parents' bed," Steve warned him. As if his own bed was a place intended for Billy Hargrove.

"Lead the way, pretty boy."

Steve wanted to protest that he hadn't put the band-aids on yet, that Billy was bleeding, that this was really weird because they almost killed each other at basketball practice that very day. But somehow, the thing that came out of his mouth was: "Your hands are still on my ass. I can't move."

Billy dropped his hands. Steve's heart was still racing in his chest. Somehow, this was actually happening. He was certain this wasn't a fantasy because he didn't sound so stupid in those.

He led the way upstairs to his bedroom, Hargrove in tow. He hoped Billy would be too preoccupied with the current situation to pay attention to the baby pictures that his mother still felt the need to keep up.

"Is that you, Harrington?"

Or not.

“Yes, it is. And yes, I know that I was an ugly baby,” he sighed.

“I actually think you were adorable,” Hargrove said, “love the quadruple chin.”

“Thanks,” Steve said and rolled his eyes.

Steve’s bedroom was messy. He recalled how he cleaned it when Nancy came over. There was liberty in bringing the disaster that was Billy Hargrove into his room, without caring if he saw all the empty Reese’s packages and the occasional pair of dirty socks that was in the process of being carried to the laundry basket.

“I like your style,” Hargrove chuckled.

“Fuck off.”

“No, really. It’s nice to see that in the end, you’re just a trashy boy like the rest of us,” Billy shrugged, “makes you more human.”

This was getting weird. Billy’s moods changed faster than Steve could follow. Hargrove looked around, his eyes landing on the nailed bat in the corner. Steve didn’t exactly know why he kept it in his bedroom, but it helped him sleep, and it wasn’t like anyone came to his room. Hadn’t been, that is.

“Did you take me up here to murder me?”

Steve’s eyes widened.

“What? No!”

*Way to go, Steve, way to go. That didn’t sound exaggerated at all. Completely natural.* God, why did Hargrove’s presence turn into a fuck-up with the emotional intelligence of a demodog.

“It’s fine, man. I’m as good as dead anyway,” Billy shrugged, “I just kinda hoped you’d fuck me first.”

“Is that why you were walking in the middle of the road after dark?

To get yourself killed? That's really lame, you know."

"What do you know of lame, Mr Perfect?" Hargrove muttered.

"Were you trying to get killed?" Steve asked urgently.

"No. I was just walking around aimlessly, okay?" Billy snapped, "Some people actually do that, when they don't have important perfect boy matters to attend to."

"Why do you keep calling me that?"

"Because you are! You have everything," he trailed off, shoulders drooping. Suddenly, he looked vulnerable.

"What exactly happened to your face?" Steve asked carefully, hoping he didn't misjudge the situation. Billy looked at him, his eyes narrowed, and for a while Steve thought he might attack him.

"I got beaten up because I was an idiot," Hargrove said simply.

"Do you want to talk about it?"

"Hell, no."

"Then I don't see any reason why we shouldn't continue what we came here for."

Billy's expression changed again. If Steve were to take a guess, he'd say it was gratitude, but boy, was Billy Hargrove a mystery.

They stood a few feet away from each other, fingers twitching nervously. Steve looked up; Billy's eyes caught his. They looked down. It was like those dumb movies Nancy's mother liked to watch.

"How are we supposed to make out when your face is all puffed up," Steve muttered. That earned him a chuckle and Billy finally moved to sit down on the bed.

"Guess you'll be the one using your mouth tonight."

"You wish." Steve walked up to Billy, mimicking their position from

the bathroom.

“Yes, I do,” Billy said, “and you know what? I’m injured and in a lot of pain. I need you to make me feel better.”

“I can give you some painkillers if you want.”

“What the hell, Harrington,” Billy asked, raising his less bruised eyebrow, “Is this how you sweet-talked the Wheeler girl? Because if it is, no wonder she dumped you.”

“I thought you said I was perfect.”

“I take it back.”

“I’ll earn it,” Steve promised, “Seriously though, don’t you want some painkillers?”

“It’s fine, really. I’m not one of those kids of yours, you don’t have to protect me.”

Steve didn’t tell Billy that right now, he looked like he needed protection more than the kids. He gently pushed him on his back and climbed on top of him. Steve nuzzled Billy’s neck, giving his skin a few tentative licks. A pair of hot hands lay on the small of his back, tugging his shirt up. They made their way to his skin, fingertips tracing his spine. Billy’s hands felt so good holding Steve down, like an anchor that he could rely on.

Steve tried not to bite down too hard on Billy’s skin. He wasn’t sure what his stance on hickeys was, and he’d rather be safe than sorry. Or maybe-

Steve chuckled.

“What’s so funny?”

“Once I gave Nancy a hickey-”

“I don’t want to hear about your ex.”

“Shut up and listen. So, she had this gigantic purple bruise on her

neck, so she put on this really tight pink turtleneck. I just imagined you in that.”

“I’d look a thousand times better than she did,” Hargrove promised.

“Shall we try?” Steve asked, grazing Billy’s neck with his teeth.

“I don’t have the turtleneck yet, idiot.”

“Oh, I thought you’d borrow Nancy’s.”

“Okay, let’s stop talking about her, it’s really weird.”

Steve rolled over so that he wasn’t straddling Billy’s hips anymore. “Move onto the bed properly. And take off your shoes.”

It took another minute of awkward shuffling around before they positioned themselves on the bed. Steve had lost his shirt, Billy’s fly was open. He was wearing the tightest, most suggestive briefs Steve had ever seen. And they were suggesting a lot.

“I should probably tell you that I’ve never done this before,” Steve said, “with a guy, I mean.”

“I figured as much,” Billy informed him.

“Okay. Just wanted to let you know.”

Steve took a deep breath and pulled Billy’s pants and briefs down. Tentative, he touched the head of Billy’s cock with his fingers, marvelling at the droplet of precome that stained his thumb. The sight made him bold; he wrapped his fingers around Billy’s cock and pumped up and down a few times. It was odd to do this without the immediate feedback from his own nervous system, but all the more thrilling. Finally, he mustered enough courage to replace his hands with his mouth.

Billy hummed in agreement when Steve wrapped his lips around the head. Steve knew enough about blowjobs not to overdo it, afraid of gagging on Hargrove’s cock. That would be just splendid. Instead, he licked the slit, dragged his tongue over the tip, closed his mouth into a small kiss to the tip, then parted his lips and took in as much as he could. Keeping one hand at the base of Billy’s cock, he knew he must

have been doing something right. Billy lay a hand on the crown of Steve's head, guiding him. Steve wanted to protest about his hair, and Hargrove actually pulled at it right then. The annoyance turned into a confused arousal, as if even his body couldn't believe that it was being turned on by such a violation. And yet here they were. Steve got so lost in his task, his mind very pleasantly quiet, that he almost missed Billy's very eloquent: "Gonnacome."

Steve pulled away in the last moment, replacing his mouth with his hand. Billy came loudly and with a simply excessive amount of jizz. Steve helped him ride it down, his own cock aching at the sight. Hargrove was still pulling Steve's hair, the bastard.

"Well, pretty boy," Billy said and rose onto his elbows, "that was pretty impressive for a beginner."

Steve hated himself for feeling proud about this.

"Well if you say so."

"Let me take care of you too," Billy said, letting go of Steve's hair, "take me."

"What?"

"Fuck me. I want you to put your dick inside me. Jesus, Harrington, I didn't know you were such a virgin."

"Oh." Steve's mind went several places at once. This was getting way too far. Giving Billy Hargrove a blowjob was one thing but penetrative sex? That was way out of his league. He had tried to stretch himself open with his fingers a couple of times, to see if it really was possible to get someone's cock inside him without it being painful, but he had never thought he'd do it with another person. He had always imagined the side of him that desired boys would forever stay in just his imagination. Billy Hargrove really was a hurricane, tearing down certainties.

"Give me a second," Steve said and stood up. He didn't have a condom of his own since he didn't need to use one for months, but he knew where his parents hid theirs. When he came back from their

bedroom, Billy was completely naked, sprawled all over his bed, eyes closed. He looked like a statue from a museum, except his dick was much bigger and his hair a lot more atrocious. Steve smiled against his will.

“Hey, Sleeping Beauty,” he said, unable to resist the petname. He didn’t get a response although he knew Billy wasn’t actually asleep. He got his bottle of lube from the nightstand - he was grateful to whichever natural force made him purchase that, despite him feeling like a weakling if he didn’t jerk off with dry hands like everybody else - and laid it down onto the bed. He took off his own clothes and tried not to feel too weird about how intimate it made the moment.

He bowed down to lightly press his lips against Billy’s. Hargrove fluttered his eyelids, as if he truly were asleep for a hundred years. He tried to smile amiably but it wasn’t easy with half of his face swollen.

“What did you bring me?” Billy asked with interest, “I thought you were new to this.”

“I am.”

“Then why do you have all of this?”

“Are you jealous?”

“Don’t flatter yourself,” Billy shook his head.

“You’re insufferable,” Steve muttered.

“I hope so. I took classes.”

Steve laughed. He climbed onto the bed and settled down between Billy’s legs.

“I wish I could kiss the soul out of you,” Steve sighed, “I’m such a good kisser.”

“Bragger.”

“Shut up.”

Steve kissed the hollow above Billy's breastbone, continuing with a series of nips between defined pecs. Billy's muscles made him feel both inferior and extremely lucky. They felt just as good under his touch as he had hoped. Hard and firm and perfect.

"You're so good to me, pretty boy," Billy said, "I feel loved and cared for."

Steve stopped kissing the groove in the middle of Billy's abdomen and reached for the lube.

"Are you sure about this?" Steve asked.

"I've never been surer about anything in my life," Billy nodded and spread his legs a little more.

Steve took his time with the preparation, until he could comfortably fit four fingers in. Billy squirmed underneath him, his cock getting hard again, but Steve wouldn't rush this. Sometime around the third finger he started doing it on purpose, teasing Billy with his fingers.

"Okay, I think that should be enough," Steve proclaimed when Billy arched his back again, trying to find a good angle.

"Are you absolutely sure?" Hargrove muttered "Might need another hour, just to be safe."

"Hey, this is my first time. I'm not fucking this up."

"Please just fuck me already."

Steve pushed the tip of his cock inside and slowly worked his way all the way in. Billy wrapped his legs around Steve's waist, Steve put his hands on either side of Billy's hips. They maintained eye-contact as Steve pulled out and pushed back in. Billy took Steve's face between his hands and slipped his fingers behind his ears, messing up his hair. That broke the sanctity of the moment and Steve picked up a pace. Billy's heel dug into his back, his hands pulled at Steve's hair.

Billy's back arched and he stared up at the ceiling. Steve shifted his weight onto his left hand, his right trailing down Billy's side. He reached the root of Billy's cock and ran his fingers up and down

Billy's length, amazed to find it hard again. He had to be at least decent at this. His thinking broke down abruptly when Billy clenched around him with a moan. Steve came with a grunt, his grip on Billy's cock firmer. He was barely down from his high when Billy came all over both of them with a muffled cry. Steve collapsed on top of Billy, allowing himself a few seconds of this, of the intimacy he craved so badly that he was willing to fuck Billy Hargrove for it. Billy's heart raced beneath his ear.

Neither of them spoke for a few minutes. Steve slipped out of Billy after a while but they stayed in the messy tangle of limbs, both afraid of moving because looking into each other's eyes would mean a confrontation they weren't ready for. Steve had never had a partner so comfortable to lie on. Billy's fingers drew little circles on Steve's shoulder, his touch so light Steve had to focus on it to notice it.

"Hey, Harrington?" Billy mumbled after a while, "I kinda need to piss."

"Yeah, me too," Steve said.

"Are you going to move so that we could do that?"

"Not sure."

"Okay, I'll just do it in your bed then."

"You're so gross," Steve groaned and rolled over.

"I can't believe you're mean to me after what just happened," Billy said. He sat up with his back to Steve. The hair on the back of his head was tangled and stuck out in odd directions. The sight made Steve unreasonably happy.

"So what, are you not an ass now that I've fucked you? Has my dick miraculously cured you?"

Hargrove stood up and walked out of the room without another word. Steve got distracted by the sight of his ass to think more about it, but as he was left alone, an uncomfortable thought started forming in his mind. He rolled the used condom off his limp cock, made a knot on it and carried it to the waste bin, all the while wondering

what the fuck that conversation was meant to be. Billy Hargrove was like an iceberg - the majority of his personality seemed to be hiding under the surface. Steve wondered whether he felt like being a scuba diver to figure out what was under the water.

He heard water run - Hargrove was taking a shower. Steve sat on the edge of his bed and waited. Finally, after maybe fifteen minutes, Billy appeared in the doorway, a towel around his waist. Steve felt oddly insulted by that.

“Thanks for everything, Harrington,” Hargrove said, collecting his clothes and putting them on. It was the bloody shirt that made Steve come back to reality.

“It’s late and you’re in the middle of nowhere,” he said.

“Don’t worry about me. I used to be a boy scout, I know my way around the woods,” Hargrove replied, going back to his usual attitude.

“I’ll drive you home,” Steve offered. Bad idea.

“Just leave me be! You had your fun, leave me alone!” Hargrove snapped.

“I’m not letting you get killed!”

“I’m not a kid or your pretty little ex! I don’t need your protection!”

Steve tilted his head to the sight.

“I could drive you somewhere else? To the city at least?”

“And then what? I have nowhere to go from there!” Hargrove yelled. His eyes widened the second that sentence got out, and Steve knew he had found he’d been looking for.

“Then stay here?”

For a long time, it looked like Hargrove would punch him, or insult him, or both, and storm out, possibly to steal Steve’s car and drive off. Steve stood his ground, hoping he looked braver than he felt. A

minute passed. Billy's expression softened, and then he was biting his lip as if he was trying hard not to cry. That made Steve feel really uncomfortable. What was he supposed to do now? He was quite sure Billy wouldn't appreciate him trying to offer consolation.

Billy nodded, looking away from Steve.

"Okay. I'll take a quick shower and then we'll figure out what to do next, okay?"

Billy nodded again and Steve walked out, closing the door to give Billy some privacy to gather up his dignity. There were traces of water on the bathroom floor, as if Billy had taken a shower and only then started looking for a towel. There was also a smudge of blood on the edge of the bathtub. Steve was tempted to leave it there just to see if his mother would notice. He didn't think she would.

He took a shower, checked the state of his hair and cringed. It was a ridiculous idea to style his hair right now, both because there wasn't the time for it and because he was going to bed soon, but it still felt wrong to be seen in such a state by someone attractive. At last, he decided to just run his brush through it a couple of times. He realised only then that he had forgotten his pyjamas upstairs, so he wrapped the towel around his shoulders, not caring as much about being seen naked as about the cold. He ran up the stairs and - absurdly - knocked on his own bedroom door before opening it.

Billy was standing by the window, staring down at the pool. He must have pulled the curtains away. Steve felt briefly annoyed - why the hell would Hargrove think it was okay to do that?! - but he managed to contain his anger before lashing out. Billy couldn't know why Steve found the view of the pool unsettling, or why he only opened the curtains when he needed to air the room.

"Oh you didn't set the house on fire with me in it?" Hargrove asked.

"Why do you keep saying that?" Steve snapped, pulling on clean briefs and a washed out Star Wars t-shirt, "I take you home, treat your wounds, offer to let you stay the night. What more proof do you need that I don't want to kill you?!"

Hargrove looked down. He looked like he was seriously trying to control his anger. Steve sat down, making himself look non-threatening.

“I know, I know. I just...I guess I find it difficult to believe that someone would actually want to treat me like that.”

Steve considered it a proof that he was a mature person that he didn’t say: “Isn’t that because you’re a jerk to everyone?”

“That someone wouldn’t beat you up?” he asked instead. Billy nodded and sat down by Steve’s side, probably because it was easier to just stare at his knees that way.

“You were my first, you know,” Billy mumbled, “god, I wanted you for so long, and then you were there and you didn’t push me away and I was pissed and you were so goddamn nice-“

He broke off abruptly. Steve assumed, from the way his voice kept rising, that he was yet again struggling with way too many emotions at once.

“Why are you nice to me?” Billy asked, quietly, pensively.

“I have no idea,” Steve shrugged, “I guess I must have hit my head. But maybe I see myself in you, a little. And maybe I believe that you deserve a chance to be better.”

“Better,” Billy scoffed, “Spending so much time with kids is getting to you.”

“I’m serious. I know there’s a reason why you act like this. But I want you to realise that you don’t have to. You don’t have to be mean to others because someone is mean to you.”

Billy spread his fingers, watched them, as if he had never seen them before. Steve waited for him to speak, feeling like he’d said enough for the moment. If Hargrove chose to be a dick even after this, then well, at least Steve knew what having sex with a guy felt like. But - and maybe he was being a tad hopeful here - it seemed like he wouldn’t. It would take time, but Steve was used to waiting.

**Author's Note:**

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